AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Original) A method of managing a virtual private network, the method comprising:

providing a graphical user interface for displaying one or more virtual private network subscribers and one or more computers offering virtual private network functions, the graphical user interface being programmed to display tunnels associated with either the subscribers and/or the computers offering virtual private network functions based on user input.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the computers offering virtual private network functions comprise extranet switches.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the virtual private network functions comprise tunneling.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the virtual private network functions comprise authentication.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein displaying subscribers and computers comprises displaying a hierarchical tree that includes the subscribers and the computers.

6. - 25. (Canceled).

26.   (New) A method of managing a virtual private network, the method comprising:

providing a graphical user interface for displaying one or more virtual private network subscribers and one or more computers offering virtual private network functions, the graphical user interface being programmed to display tunnels associated with either the subscribers and/or the computers offering virtual private network functions based on user input, the graphical user interface further being programmed to:

display a palette from a collection of palettes that provide virtual private network sub-elements associated with either the one or more subscribers and/or the one or more computers offering virtual private network functions, the palette being displayed controlled by user selection of an element,

display a properties dialog from a collection of properties dialogs that receive user input configuring a one of the one or more subscribers, the one or more computers offering virtual private network functions and the sub-elements, the properties dialog displayed being controlled by user selection of an element from the display of the one or more virtual private network subscribers and the one or more computers offering virtual private network functions, and

enable a user through the use of a wizard to configure a one of the one or more virtual private network subscribers and one or more computers offering virtual private network functions by interacting with a preprogrammed series of dialogs which query the user for different sets of virtual private network element characteristics.

27.   (New) The method of claim 26, wherein display one or more subscribers and one or more computers comprises display a hierarchical tree that displays associated virtual private network sub-elements.

28.   (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the computers comprise extranet switches.

29.   (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the sub-elements comprise SNMP properties.

30.   (New) The method claim 26, wherein the sub-elements comprise an authentication technique.

31.   (New) The method of claim 27, further comprising modifying one of the one or more subscribers and one or more computers listed in the hierarchical tree by dragging and dropping a virtual private network element from a displayed palette.

32.   (New) A method of managing a virtual private network, the method comprising:

providing a graphical user interface for displaying one or more virtual private network subscribers and one or more computers offering virtual private network functions, the graphical user interface being programmed to display tunnels associated with either the subscribers and/or the computers offering virtual private network functions based on user input, the graphical user interface further being programmed to:

display a hierarchical tree that includes one or more extranet switches as the one or more computers, the one or more extranet switches being selectable by a user;

display a one of a palette from a collection of palettes that provide groupings of extranet switch attributes, the palette displayed being controlled by user selection one of the extranet switches;

display a one of a collection of properties dialogs that collect information associated with the extranet switch attributes, the properties dialog displayed being controlled by user selection of an element; and

display a wizard that enables the user to configure one or more of the extranet switches by interacting with a preprogrammed series of dialogs which query the user for different sets of virtual private network element characteristics.